

Estates Working Party

Report of the Estates Working Party meeting held on 9th March 2026.

Present: Cllrs V Armstrong, M Gillespie, C Ibbotson, P Mount, D Shuttleworth and J Thacker

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

Head Groundsman: Mr P Clarke

Also in attendance was Cllr D Billings throughout and Cllrs K Pearce and S Turner for discussion of item 7 only.

1. To receive apologies for absence, if any
Apologies were received from Cllr S Kinvig.
2. To receive disclosures of interest
There were no disclosures of interest.
3. To receive the Head Groundsman's report
 - a. Projects programme update
It was reported that works to the chapel of rest would be scheduled now that the weather was starting to improve.
 - b. Routine maintenance programme
The Head Groundsman reported that grass cutting had begun where possible as well as weed killing, including that required to the thistles in the wildflower area.

It was also reported that the replacement shrubs for the planters in The Square were now ready for collection and would be planted immediately with bulbs scheduled for planting in Autumn. The grasses taken from The Square planters would be replanted at Larchwood.
4. To discuss the Cemetery, including
 - a. Cemetery (A) and (B)
It was noted that the leaking standpipe in the new cemetery area had now been repaired.

It was also noted that the Christmas wreaths had been removed from plots in the cemetery and that there would be ongoing monitoring of other items and flowers left on plots.
 - b. Cemetery B layout
Initial ideas and costings for a scattering section and associated pathways, benches and bins were put forward and would be brought back to the next meeting of the Estates Working Party for discussion, once members had visited the site and considered the requirements.
5. To consider any maintenance issues
An initial quote for the war memorial lettering repainting had been received with it being noted that a planning application would also need to be submitted to Blaby District Council prior to the works being undertaken. This item would be brought back for consideration and recommendation once a second quote had been obtained.

It was noted that the Parish Manager had met with a representative of St Andrews Church regarding the recommendation of the War Memorial Trust, to remove wreaths attached to the war memorial due to the risk of damage. However, that the representative from St Andrews felt that the damage caused was due to sunlight rather than the poppies and therefore did not wish for them to be removed.

It was reported that the sensors on the lights within the closed churchyard had been repaired.
6. Emergency exit doors
Recommended for approval
To support the resolution of the Village Hall Management Committee in opting for brown doors to replace external doors, as and when required. The Estates Working Party would specifically request a dark oak colour to match the eaves and garage/workshop doors.

7. Planter / hanging basket sponsorship

Cllrs K Pearce and S Turner made representation regarding discussions of the Finance Working Party about the potential sponsorship of planters and hanging baskets throughout Countesthorpe. A request was made of the Finance Working Party to update the Estates Working Party as investigations progress.

8. To receive any correspondence

There was no correspondence.

9. Commonwealth War Memorials – Herbert Swann

It was reported that residents had been in touch with the Parish Office regarding the ongoing works of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, specifically about the headstone currently being produced for Herbert Swann, and whether a ceremony could be organised once the grave was appropriately commemorated. Once an installation date had been confirmed, this item would be brought back to the Estates Working Party for discussion.

10. To consider matters raised to the attention of the Estates Working Party by non-member Councillors

There were no matters raised.

11. To receive matters arising for information purposes

There were no matters arising.

12. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 7th April at 2pm.